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Cave Creek | Carefree Transportation Framework Study

Over 1,300 Town Residents and Visitors Take Part in Shaping the Area's Future Transportation System



More than 700 visitors at the towns' largest events were surveyed to identify any issues they experienced while traveling and parking.

In the fall 2013, an intensive public involvement effort was undertaken to engage residents, business owners, recreational users and special event visitors in Cave Creek and Carefree to determine the transportation issues they are experiencing, and their needs and priorities for addressing these issues.

More than 1,300 community members and visitors participated in this effort through multiple engagement opportunities. These included:

- An online survey for Cave Creek and Carefree residents and business owners, which was completed by more than 300 people;
- An online survey of bicyclists, which was returned by nearly 200 recreational and competitive on-road and off-road cyclists;
- In-person surveys of more than 700 attendees at four large, local community events: Taste of Cave Creek, Thunderbird Artists, Wild West Days and the Carefree Christmas Festival;
- Three community workshops with local business owners, community organizations, special event organizers and recreational users;
- A public meeting, which was attended by several elected officials from both towns, as well as other local residents and
- Key stakeholder interviews with town staff and representatives from community organizations.

The study team is currently developing potential alternative solutions to address the transportation problems identified by the community, as well as additional location-specific recommendations based on an analysis of the existing conditions and projected future traffic levels, development, population and employment growth in the study area.

ATTEND PUBLIC MEETING

Tuesday, April 29 • 6-8 p.m.

Cave Creek Council Chambers
37622 N. Cave Creek Rd., Cave Creek

The meeting will provide an opportunity to review and provide input on alternatives for potential pedestrian, bicycle, equestrian, roadway, parking and other improvements.

COMMENT ONLINE

If you are unable to attend the meeting, you can review and comment on the potential improvements on the study web page at:
<http://CaveCreekCarefree.azmag.gov>.

QUESTIONS/MAILING LIST

For questions or comments about the study or to sign up for the study mailing list, contact:

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STUDY WEB PAGE

<http://CaveCreekCarefree.azmag.gov>

BOTH TOWNS HAVE COMMON TRANSPORTATION CONCERNS AND PRIORITIES

Community members in both towns expressed similar concerns about local transportation problems, and potential solutions.



Safe pedestrian connections are a top priority for residents of both towns.

THE TOP REPORTED CONCERNS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- Inadequate pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity,
- Traffic congestion and difficulty parking during large events,
- Insufficient business parking and
- The need to further control unsafe driving.

TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES, COMMUNITY MEMBERS SAID THEY WANT:

- Safer pedestrian and bicycle connections (either sidewalks and bike lanes or multi-use paths) and improved crosswalk safety,
- Shared parking adjacent to businesses,
- More special event parking and a local detour route to minimize impacts of special events,
- More enforcement of speeding and reckless driving and
- Improvements in roadway design to (1) slow traffic, (2) reduce unsafe driving and (3) fix roadway elements that cause driver confusion or safety issues.



A Foothills Caring Corps van picks up residents from a shopping trip.

Community members do not believe major roadway improvements, such as widening or extending streets, are needed. Rather, they want the towns to focus on keeping existing streets and landscaping well-maintained.

Transit improvements are also not a priority for residents, though some see a need for modest transit improvements to augment existing services and better serve seniors. In addition, many local businesses would like to see a seasonal local shuttle for visitors.



Bicyclists enjoy riding in the towns because of the natural beauty and terrain, but say they don't feel safe on the roads.

BICYCLISTS LOVE THE TOWNS, BUT DON'T FEEL SAFE

The Cave Creek and Carefree area is a mecca for avid cyclists, primarily from Scottsdale and Phoenix, who are attracted to ride there because of the area's natural beauty and ideal terrain for training. However, cyclists say they don't feel safe riding there, due to a lack of dedicated bike lanes, limited shoulders and poor pavement quality on most major arterials. Nearly all cyclists who ride in the area come back without their bikes to shop and dine in the towns, but feel frustrated by local merchants and drivers, whom they say are not bike-friendly. Bicyclists say dedicated bike lanes or paths are the highest priority for improving cycling in the towns.

SPECIAL EVENT VISITORS HAVE FEW ISSUES, WILLING TO CONSIDER PARKING OPTIONS

While local residents believe special event traffic and parking are issues, most event visitors are not reporting any difficulty traveling to events and locating parking. The majority of attendees are parking at local businesses less than three blocks from an event. Those who experienced some issues were visitors who arrived at the highest peak travel time and parked at least one-half mile away at the largest all-day events.

Despite experiencing relatively few issues, most event visitors are willing to consider alternative parking options, such as a free event shuttle from a centralized parking lot, priority carpool parking and paying for convenient parking.



Traffic backs up on Cave Creek Road at the Wild West Days event.

COMMUNITY CAN WEIGH IN ON OPTIONS TO ADDRESS TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Community members, recreational users and other interested parties will have an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the location and type of potential pedestrian, bicycle, equestrian, roadway, parking, transit and other improvements being considered. Given the strong desire for multi-modal safety and connectivity improvements in the towns, the community's preferences for how and where future pedestrian and bicycle improvements might be integrated into the existing road network to provide "complete streets" – and how these might be implemented in a context-sensitive way in each town – will be an important consideration.

Potential options will be shared and discussed at a public meeting on Wednesday, April 29 at the Cave Creek Council Chambers. Alternative concepts will also be posted on the study website, <http://CaveCreekCarefree.azmag.gov>, for those unable to attend the meeting.

Moving forward, the study team will work with the towns to prepare the study recommendations, and will present the recommendations for input at a public meeting in late summer or early fall 2014.

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LINKING ACTIVITY CENTERS AND CORRIDORS

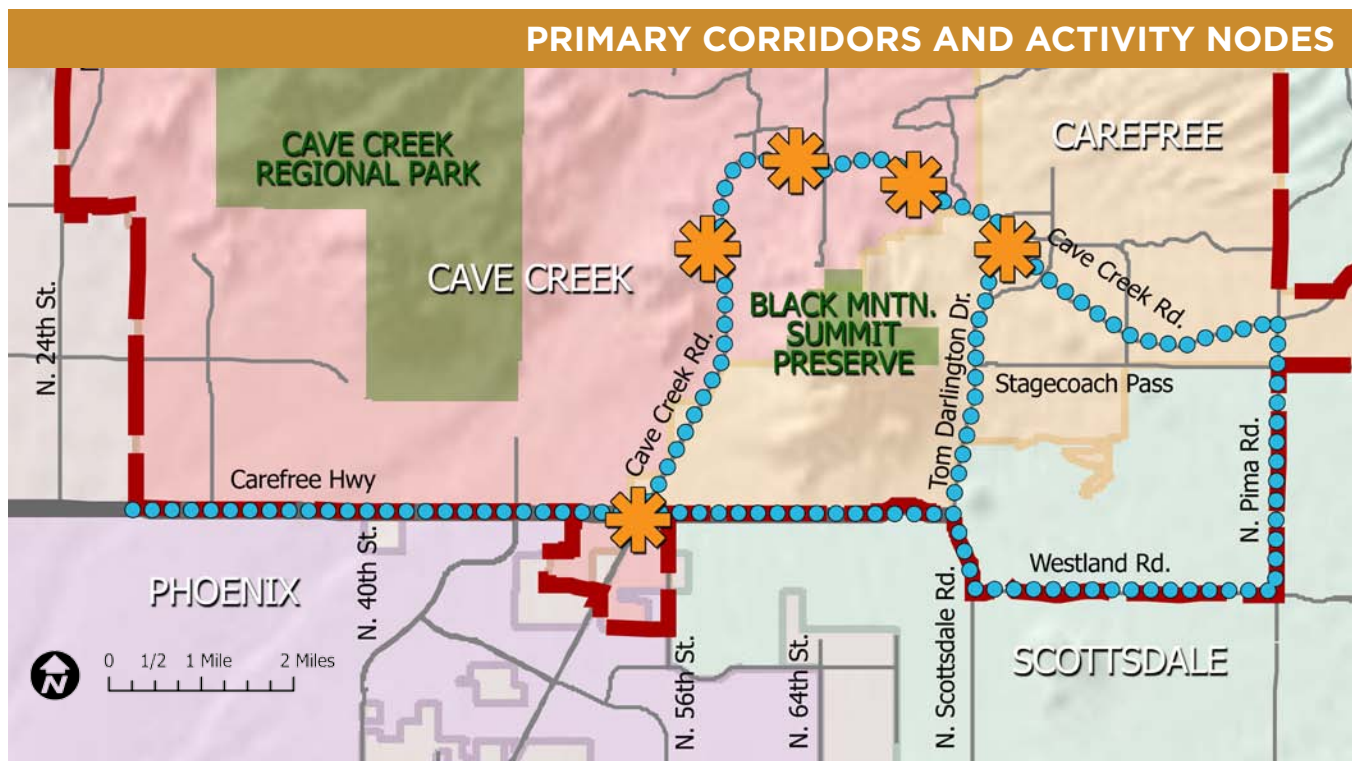
During the initial study phase, five primary activity centers were identified in the Cave Creek and Carefree study area:

- The “Entertainment District” on Cave Creek Road where most of the bars are clustered,
- The “Shopping District” on Cave Creek Road between Spur Cross Road and Schoolhouse Road,
- The “Civic District” on Cave Creek Road near town hall,
- The “Carefree Town Center District” and
- The “Crossroads or Gateway District” at the intersection of Carefree Highway and Cave Creek Road.

Potential options will be shared and discussed at a public meeting on April 29 at the Cave Creek Council Chambers. Alternative concepts will also be posted on the study website, CaveCreekCarefree.azmag.gov, for those unable to attend the meeting.

WHEN WILL IDENTIFIED IMPROVEMENTS BE MADE?

The intent of the study is to develop a master transportation plan that includes recommended transportation policies and improvements that could be made in the near and long term. There is no funding currently identified for these types of improvements. The study is a planning-level document that will guide transportation planning in the Towns of Cave Creek and Carefree, and will lay the foundation to secure potential future local, regional and federal funding for improvements.



LEGEND

- Study Area Primary Corridor Primary Activity Node